

## Editorial Department.

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### THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL MEDICINE.

IN taking a survey of the contributions made by alienists of different nations to the domain of psychological medicine during the last century, one cannot help being struck with the fact of the immense preponderance of the French in the direction of original observation and thought. What nation can present such a collection of names as the following: Pinel, Esquirol, Bayle, Calmiel, Foville, Devergie, Baillarger, Falret, Marc, Marcé, Briere de Boismont, Billod, De Lasiauve, Broussais, Tardieu, Ferrus, Leuret, Legrand du Saulle, Moreau, Morel, Voisin, Charcot, Luys, Dagonet, Ball, Magnan, and scores of others younger now but crowding to the front? Many forms of insanity have been first differentiated by these men; many others elucidated which had only been imperfectly known before.

Germany comes next, but far behind. A few of her alienists have done some good work, but the majority have, while some of them writers of voluminous communications and books, done little that really advances the science. However, in this country there is a disposition, arising mostly from ignorance of what the French have done and are doing, to attach undue importance to every little contribution which a German author writes. As a rule, they are obscure, speculative, dogmatic, unpractical.

Next, but far behind the Germans, come the English, who have almost done nothing. Non-restraint is theirs, though the idea came from Pinel, and that is about all. Since Conolly's time

English psychological medicine has been dead, so far as original work is concerned.

Italian alienists are doing wonderfully good work now, and bid fair to attain the very front rank ere many years have passed. There is an earnestness and a thoroughness about their way of approaching a subject, a disposition to study the labors of others in the same direction, which the French and especially the Germans might imitate with advantage.

And the United States? where shall we place ourselves? Six months ago no modern treatise on insanity by an American author existed. Two American works are now before the public. A comprehensive judgment as to the part played by America in the advance of psychiatry will be imperfect without taking these recent publications into account. A careful review of both will be found in our pages.

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BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

We have received a circular from the Secretary of the Psychological Section of the British Medical Association, in which we are requested to inform our readers, that the place of meeting is Liverpool, from July 31st to August 3, 1884. "In addition to the usual papers the following special subjects have been selected for discussion:—

"I. The Employment of the Insane. Introduced by Dr. Yellowlees.

"II. Bone Degeneration in the Insane. Introduced by Dr. J. Wigglesworth.

"III. Cerebral Localization in relation to Psychological Medicine. Introduced by Dr. Bevan Lewis, L. R. C. P.

"IV. General Paralysis. Introduced (if time permit) by Dr. J. W. Mickle."

The titles of all papers to be read at the meeting, and notices of intention to join in the debates, on the first three of the special subjects named, should be sent to the address given below, not later than the 30th of June.